

Message Text

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PAGE 01 PEKING 02282 261142Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----061679 270717Z /17

R 261117Z JUL 78
FM USLO PEKING
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1482

S E C R E T PEKING 2282

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: CH, TW
SUBJ: CTS OFFICIAL COMMENTS ON NEGOTIATIONS WITH TAIWAN

1. IN A JULY 20 CONVERSATION WITH A USLO EMPLOYEE, AN OFFICIAL OF THE CHINA INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL SERVICE POINTEDLY BROUGHT UP NORMALIZATION OF US-CHINA RELATIONS. THE OFFICIAL STATED THAT NORMALIZATION COULD BE CARRIED OUT NOW BECAUSE THE PRC WAS WILLING TO SETTLE THE TAIWAN PROBLEM WITHOUT FORCE OF ARMS.

2. THE OFFICIAL EXPLAINED THAT THE TAIWAN PROBLEM COULD BE SOLVED BY NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN CHINA AND THE KMT. WHEN ASKED WHEN THESE TALKS COULD TAKE PLACE, HE REPLIED THAT THEY COULD NOT BE HELD UNTIL THE U.S. DEPARTED FROM TAIWAN AND PROBABLY NOT FOR SOME TIME THEREAFTER. WHEN ASKED IF THE CHINESE WERE CONTENT TO WAIT THAT LONG, THE CTS OFFICIAL EXPLAINED THAT THE CHINESE SIDE HAD ESTABLISHED NO FIXED TIME LIMIT. HE STRESSED THAT THE CHINESE COULD WAIT FOR A SOLUTION.

3. WHEN ASKED WHERE HIS OPINIONS CAME FROM SINCE THEY DIFFERED FROM WHAT OTHER OFFICIALS HAVE SAID IN THE PAST, THE OFFICIAL OFFERED THAT HE HAD READ ABOUT THE CURRENT SITUATION IN (RESTRICTED CIRCULATION) REFERENCE NEWS AND HAD ALSO "HEARD
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THINGS" FROM OTHER UNNAMED SOURCES.

4. COMMENT: CHINA TRAVEL SERVICE OFFICIALS CANNOT BE PRESUMED TO HAVE DIRECT ACCESS TO CHINESE LEADERSHIP VIEWS ON KEY POLICY ISSUES OF THIS SORT. MOREOVER, A NUMBER OF RECENT TRAVELLERS HAVE COMMENTED ON THE UNCHARACTERISTIC FRANKNESS WITH WHICH CTS GUIDES HAVE EXPRESSED THEIR PERSONAL VIEWS

ON MATTERS RANGING FROM DIRECT CRITICISM OF CHAIRMAN MAO TO CURRENT CHINESE LEADERSHIP QUESTIONS. REFERENCE NEWS PRESUMABLY CARRIED ARTICLES BASED ON CONGRESSMAN WOLFF'S HONG KONG PRESS CONFERENCE (IN WHICH HE CITED PRC OFFICIALS AS HAVING HINTED AT PRC WILLINGNESS TO ENGAGE IN FUTURE NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE KMT⁴¹ AND THESE ALMOST CERTAINLY PROVIDED THE BASIS FOR HIS COMMENTS. AT THE VERY LEAST, HOWEVER, REMARKS OF THIS SORT ARE SUFFICIENTLY UNUSUAL TO BE NOTED. WOODCOCK

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NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: FOREIGN RELATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 26 jul 1978
Decaption Date: 20 Mar 2014
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978PEKING02282
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780307-1076
Format: TEL
From: PEKING
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
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Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780718/aaaaapix.tel
Line Count: 71
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 9ffb576c-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 10 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1880114
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: CTS OFFICIAL COMMENTS ON NEGOTIATIONS WITH TAIWAN
TAGS: PEPR, CH, TW, US
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odhc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/9ffb576c-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014